

Subject Line:

Washington State Proposed Building Codes 21-GP1-103 & 21-GP1-136

Message:

Dear Members of the Washington State Building Code Council,

I am writing to express my opposition to the following proposed code changes for the state energy code:

- - 21-GP1-136 – Bans the use of natural gas for commercial water heating uses and requires the use of electric heat pumps for water heating purposes.
 - 21-GP1-103- Requires electric heat pumps for all new commercial construction and retrofits and bans the use of natural gas for commercial space heating (HVACs).

I rely on natural gas to provide efficient and reliable energy for my home. Natural gas technologies provide me with warmth, comfort, and affordability. Although the commercial code does not mandate a ban on natural gas in residential construction, I am concerned by the overall direction of the SBCC in limiting energy choice, and taking actions that could have negative impacts on power reliability.

Natural gas from buildings is responsible for less than 10% of the amount of the state's emissions. Policies like this are not likely to result in reduced emissions, but will increase my utility bills, and costs of living.

Natural gas companies provide reliable, affordable energy, and are able to add increasing amounts of renewable natural gas onto their systems. Replacing the natural gas energy that total electrification will remove from the region's diverse energy portfolio will increase the risk of blackouts and price hikes to ratepayers such as myself

We didn't ban the electric transmission system or electric equipment just because non-renewable fuels can be used to generate electricity. Nor should we ban the gas system and gas equipment for the same reason. Just as wind and solar have become more affordable over time, so too will renewable natural gas and hydrogen.

It is for these reasons that I urge a no vote on these two proposals.

Thank you for your consideration.